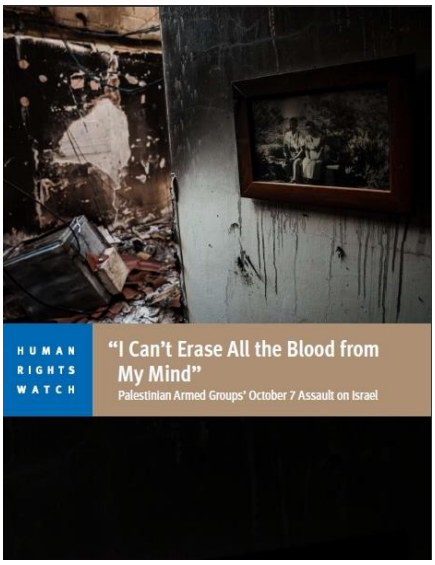
“I Can’t Erase All the Blood from My Mind”



Palestinian Armed Groups’ October 7 Assault on Israel
On October 7, 2023, the Qassam Brigades and at least four other Palestinian armed groups carried out a planned, coordinated assault in southern Israel, attacking military outposts and bases, and numerous residential communities and social gatherings. The armed groups killed at least 815 civilians, and they took as hostage at least 251 civilians and Israeli security force personnel and brought them back to Gaza.
“I Can’t Erase All the Blood”: Palestinian Armed Groups’ October 7 Assault on Israel is based on research conducted between October 2023 and June 2024, and includes interviews with 94 Israeli and other nationals who witnessed the attack, as well as 50 family members of victims of abuses; first responders; medical experts; municipal officials; and journalists who later visited the attack sites. Human Rights Watch also verified and analyzed over 280 photos and videos.
Palestinian armed groups committed numerous war crimes during the assault, including attacks targeting civilians and civilian objects; willful killing of persons in custody; cruel and other inhumane treatment; sexual and gender-based violence; hostage taking; mutilation and despoiling (robbing) of bodies; use of human shields; and pillage and looting. Human Rights Watch also concluded that the planned murder of civilians and the taking of hostages – a form of unlawful imprisonment – were crimes against humanity.
Human Rights Watch calls on Palestinian armed groups to immediately release all civilian hostages and outlines recommendations to bring accountability for the crimes detailed in the report.
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